

Merri Mashers Brewing Club

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mmm

MAKE.TALK.DRINK.BEER.

LETTER FROM THE PREZ

Welcome to the 3rd edition of the Merri Mashers newsletter. There have been a couple of club highlights for me since our last edition....

I went along to Pale Ale Mania over in Diamond Creek with Kris, and got to meet the President and a few others from the Worthogs committee. Unfortunately I made an awful mess of my "Red IPA" entry into the comp, bottling hastily out of my keg on Sunday morning before heading to the comp without realising my keg fridge (sitting outside on my back deck) had been turned off since Thursday, when I was mucking around with the club's new Blichmann Beer Gun.

I know...excuses excuses!

Hopefully those of you who tasted my beer (cold & fresh) at last month's meeting thought more of it than the competition judges, who pointed out it was flat and had diacetyl! My apologies for letting the club down...lesson learned!

Anyway, the other highlight was our "Tutored Tasting Session", excellently run by Sam & Marcus over at Thunder Road. Who'd have thought tasting deliberately fouled beer would be so much fun eh?

I managed to pick a few of the ten different "taints", including oxidation and light strike. The former reminded me of an obviously badly handled Kolsch I had from a country bottle a year or so back, and the latter tasted a lot like the Coronas I used to drink (thankfully rarely) back in my pre-craft days.

The worst of the night for me would have to be mercaptan, a sulphur taint that one member described (quite accurately) as 'rotten armpit'. I understand it's brought on by yeast autolysis/cell death, thankfully not something I've discovered in any of my beers to date, as it was bloody horrible! I look forward to our next session, where we'll taste the final 10 "taints" in our FlavorActiv kit.

That's it from me for now, I hope to see you all at the Gertrude on August 26, where I hope to bring along a couple of beers for side-by-side tasting, both brewed using an identical recipe but with one using Maris Otter as the base, the other a variety of "old school" malt named Schooner procured through an AHB member (DiscoStu).

Cheers!
- Justin

JULY MEETING FUN

The latest midwinter gathering of Mashers proved to be another successful evening with over ten original Pale Ales showcased by proud brewers.

The Gertrude again hosted the club with many members arriving early for their ritual Pint & Parma. The meeting proper involved the usual points of business such as welcoming new members and congratulations on the club's first competition scores at the Stout comp. The Pale Ale tastings followed.

Undertaken in a more informal style to the Free Hops tasting, the Pale Ales were sampled with the brewer standing in front of the crowd disclosing information about the beer (as one Masher pointed out, 'it was kind of like Alcoholics Anonymous ... echoes of the future?'). One or two brews were "interesting", but for the most part the excellent character of the club's members found its way into each and every beverage.

The meeting concluded at a reasonable hour as most members were now jolly and the bar downstairs had closed (although not for all patrons, as a couple of sneaky Mashers found out afterwards).

As a consequence of the tasting several Merri Mashers entered pale ales into the Worthogs' competition out at Diamond Creek. More info on this over the page. Well done guys!

EQUIPMENT LIBRARY

Two items have been added to the equipment library since the last newsletter: a grain mill and a Blichmann Beer Gun. All members can now use these two vital pieces of hardware to mill their malted grain and bottle beer from kegs.

If you want to use or borrow any equipment, simply contact the president by email or ph. and he will tell you who has the item and where. This process will be more automated with the development of the new website which is still in progress. Locations of each item will then be published online.

Remember, if you have any ideas for further club equipment purchases don't hesitate to raise them at the next club meeting or by email!

GERTRUDE BREW

When the weather comes good it is likely that the Merri Mashers will be invited to do a brew on the outdoor decking area of the Gertrude Hotel.

It should be a good event for the club and the hotel both. When a date has been settled on we will discuss the particulars: until then, watch this space.

BREW DAY CASE SWAP

The club will be holding its inaugural brew day and case swap in November (tentatively the 23rd) in Thornbury. Fifteen participants are already confirmed so it will definitely be a lively affair with plenty of eating, drinking and brewing on the day!

For those unfamiliar with case swaps, the idea is to bring along a case of beer that you have brewed yourself, then swap it out with the other brewers so that you return home with a mixed case of beer.

Then in the following weeks as you taste the beers you can provide feedback to the brewers, if you like.

There is no beer style rules for the swap: all beers are welcome. Jump onto the thread on AHB to confirm your attendance or send one of the committee members an email.

BAYSIDE OKTOBERFEST

The Bayside Brewers have issued a shoutout to all Melbourne clubs about their yearly Oktoberfest.

If you have a German beer on the go or you are planning to brew one before October, make sure you enter it at the usual venues (Keg King, Grain & Grape) before the date.

October 4th, 2014 HICKINBOTHAM WINERY DROMANA

Oktoberfest is an annual homebrewed beer competition organised and run by the Bayside Brewers.

Entries are open for all German Style Beers in the German Ales, Pale Lager, Dark Lager and Bock Categories.

Entries are open to all Victorian and interstate independent and club-affiliated amateur brewers.

PRIZES AWARDED FOR:

Champion Brewer (Trophy and \$100 Grain & Grape Voucher)

Champion Beer of Show (Trophy and 25kg Grain)

First Place in each Category

(Trophy & \$75 Voucher)

Second & Third Place in each category (5kg Grain)

Best Novice Brewer (Trophy & \$60 Vicbrew Award)

ENTRIES CLOSE 12pm SATURDAY 27th September
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE SEE ENTRY FORM
OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE - BAYSIDEBREWERS.ORG.AU

Let's get a contingent together and put on a strong showing if we can! Merri Mashers, blitzkrieg!

TAINT KIT TASTINGS

Tuesday August 8 marked the first of the two taint kit sessions aimed at helping Mashers understand the defects common in beer.

It was an educational experience for all involved; though not all the taints were exactly *delicious!* Diacetyl, skunk, mercaptan and oxidation taints were just some of the interesting flavours we experienced.

A massive thanks to Sam and all the folks at Thunder Road Brewing for hosting us and for providing a keg of their deliciously clean and neutral Full Steam Pale Lager beer for us to ruin.

We look forward to the next session, which is currently TBA but should be within a month or two.

MJ YEAST SURVEY

The Mangrove Jacks Yeast survey has been simplified and updated to be even quicker for the average Merri Masher to fill out. So if you haven't done so already - there's no excuse - check your email for the URL and let Cyrrer Malt know about those lag times and attenuation quirks - or absence of them!

AUGUST MEETING

The August meeting is planned for Tuesday August 26 at the Gertrude Hotel.

ANHC MELB DINNER

Ticket sales conclude this Friday, the 22nd of August for the ANHC Melbourne food pairing dinner.

The event is going to be ridiculously delicious and is of tremendous value considering the high-level of food (Chef Brendan Sheldick of Rosetta Ristorante) 5 courses, paired to 5 excellent home-brewed beers from homebrewers who have turned pro (and still brew at home)!

Each beer has been brewed on their homebrew rig using each, their preferred techniques which will be discussed on the evening at each course introduction.

Ticket sales are from the ANHC 2014 website.

PALE ALE COMP RESULTS

Two Merri Mashers ended up driving out to Diamond Creek for the Worthogs' 2014 Pale Ale Mania competition.

We had four beers in contention: an English Pale Ale and an American Pale Ale from Kris N., an IPA from Justin S. and an American Pale Ale from Declan J. A great effort by the three brewers.

Unfortunately none of our beers placed in the top rankings, but our best brew was Kris N.'s English Pale Ale, so well done Kris! He may be a *Relaxed Brewer* but he's no slouch when it comes to entering competitions.

ANHC 2014

It's all happening for the Merri Mashers visit to the Australian National Homebrewing Conference being held this October at University House in Canberra. Many members have already bought tickets and it looks like our attendance may even reach double figures.

This is a fantastic effort for such a new club: we're going to make a splash alright!

Flights are getting expensive so book quickly. Alternatively remember there is a car driving up with car-pooling and equipment-carrying possibilities.

For those members interested who haven't done so, you can check out the website (<http://anhc.com.au/>) and view the available ticket packages.

SHIRTS FOR SOME

We have a total of nine members keen on official Merri Masher shirts. This is enough for the order to go ahead.

The final price and design is still to be confirmed.



CLUB RESOURCES

Club Website:

<http://www.merrimashers.org>

Blog:

<http://www.merrimashers.org/blog/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/merri.mashers>

Aussie Home Brewer:

<http://aussiehomebrewer.com/forum/101-the-merri-mashers/>